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## Legal profession calls for immediate removal of asylum seeker children from Nauru

The Australian legal profession has today called for asylum seeker children and their families to be moved off Nauru as a matter of urgency.

Law Council of Australia President, Morry Bailes, said its concerns echoed those of the medical profession, where respected bodies such as the Australian Medical Association, The Royal Australasian College of Physicians and The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners have raised alarm over the welfare of refugee and asylum seeker children held on Nauru.

“When you have the leading medical bodies in Australia saying unequivocally that the physical and mental health of children is deteriorating dangerously as a result of detention then urgent attention is required,” Mr Bailes said.

“Removing asylum seeker children from the Nauru is not just medically necessary, it is also consistent with Australia’s obligations under domestic and international law.

“The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child be the primary consideration.

“Indefinite detention of children for the purpose of determining their immigration status will never comply with this Convention.

“Australia must acknowledge its responsibility for the health and safety of those asylum seekers that have been transferred to other countries for offshore processing and assessment,” Mr Bailes said.

Mr Bailes said the Law Council’s [Asylum Seeker Policy](#) and [Regional Processing Policy](#) sets out Australia’s obligations regarding the detention of children and promotes policies that have the goal of ending long-term detention for those seeking asylum.

“If children must be detained as part of the immigration process, they should be detained only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time,” Mr Bailes said.

“If necessary as a last resort, community-based detention should be used for children and families, provided that it includes appropriate access to services and facilities, including healthcare and education.

“The current crisis again highlights that Australia needs a stronger commitment towards a cooperative, regional approach that meets its international obligations.

“Long-term, indefinite detention on Nauru is simply no place for any child. The Australian Government, in recognising this simple truth, should act with the appropriate urgency,” Mr Bailes said.

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